

independent form. Claims 23-41 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Claims 1, 6-8, 10-12, and 15-22 have been amended as to formal matters and/or to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention.

Favorable reconsideration is requested.

A Claim To Priority and certified copies of the priority documents for this application were submitted on March 20, 2000, as evidenced by the returned receipt postcard bearing the stamp of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, a copy of which is attached hereto. Applicants respectfully request acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the receipt of the certified copies.

The Office Action states that the title of the invention is not descriptive. The title has been amended to read as follows: --INFORMATION PROCESSING APPARATUS AND METHOD THAT UTILIZES STORED INFORMATION ABOUT A MOUNTABLE DEVICE--. Applicants respectfully submit that the title, as amended, is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The specification has been amended to correct a clerical error on page 46 at line 10, to change "Fig. 29" to --Fig. 31-- to reflect what is shown in the drawings. Applicants respectfully submit that the change adds no new matter to the disclosure of the present application.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1-11, 18, 19, and 21-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,249,835 (Isoda). Claims 12-17, 20, and 27-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Isoda in view of

U.S. Patent No. 6,370,603 (Silverman et al.). Cancellation of Claims 23-41 renders their rejections moot. Applicants submit that independent Claims 1, 8, 12, and 18-22, together with the claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus that includes communication control means and memory means. The communication control means connects to an external device so as to allow communication. The memory means stores information about a device mountable on the information processing apparatus in a memory area that is accessible by the external device via the communication control means. The device mountable on the information processing apparatus includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to the information processing apparatus, and a function assist part for assisting a function of the information processing apparatus.

One important feature of Claim 1 is that the device mountable on the information processing apparatus includes an attachable part (e.g., a connector portion of an ink jet head) and a function assist part (e.g., a jet nozzle portion of an ink jet head). The information regarding the device is stored in the memory means of the information processing apparatus and is accessible by the external device via the communication control means. By virtue of this feature, information about an optional device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus may be easily obtained, which facilitates identification of functions of the optional device, and which also facilitates identification of combined functions when a plurality of

optional devices are mountable on the information processing apparatus.

Isoda relates to system that converts a print instruction into print data of a rasterization level that is determined according to a data transmission capacity. Isoda teaches the use of an IEEE 1394 interface and a memory (RAM2) for storing an application, an OS (operating system), and an externally supplied printer driver.

Nothing in Isoda is believed to teach or suggest an information processing apparatus that includes "memory means for storing information about a device mountable on said information processing apparatus in a memory area that is accessible by the external device via said communication control means, wherein the device mountable on said information processing apparatus includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to said information processing apparatus, and a function assist part for assisting a function of said information processing apparatus," as recited in Claim 1.

As discussed above, the device mountable on the information processing apparatus includes an attachable part (e.g., a connector portion of an ink jet head) and a function assist part (e.g., a jet nozzle portion of an ink jet head), and the information regarding the device is stored in the memory means of the information processing apparatus and is accessible by the external device via the communication control means. By virtue of this feature, information about the device may be easily obtained, which facilitates identification of functions of the device. Applicants submit that Isoda is silent regarding such a feature.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is not anticipated by Isoda, and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Independent Claims 8,

12, 18, 19, 21, and 22 include a feature similar to that discussed above, in which a mountable device includes an attachable part and a function assist part, and in which stored information regarding the device is accessible by an external unit. Therefore, those claims also are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 12 is directed to an information processing system that includes communication control means, holding means, acquisition means, and display control means. The communication control means connects to a plurality of information processing apparatuses so as to allow communication. The holding means holds, in a first information processing apparatus, information about a device mountable on the first information processing apparatus in a memory area that is accessible by another information processing apparatus via the communication control means. The acquisition means allows a second information processing apparatus to acquire the information held in the memory area via the communication control means. The display control means controls a display based upon the information acquired by the acquisition means in the second information processing apparatus. The device mountable on the first information processing apparatus includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to the first information processing apparatus, and a function assist part for assisting a function of the first information processing apparatus.

Silverman et al., as understood by Applicants, relates to a USB interface for enabling communication between devices having different protocols. Applicants submit that a combination of Isoda and Silverman et al., assuming such combination would even be permissible, would fail to teach or suggest an information processing system that includes

"holding means for holding, in a first information processing apparatus, information about a device mountable on the first information processing apparatus in a memory area that is accessible by another information processing apparatus via said communication control means," and "acquisition means for allowing a second information processing apparatus to acquire the information held in the memory area via said communication control means," wherein "the device mountable on the first information processing apparatus includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to the first information processing apparatus, and a function assist part for assisting a function of the first information processing apparatus," as recited in Claim 12.

As discussed above, Isoda is silent regarding the use of a device mountable on an information processing apparatus, wherein the device includes an attachable part (e.g., a connector portion of an ink jet head) and a function assist part (e.g., a jet nozzle portion of an ink jet head), and wherein information regarding the device is stored in memory means of the information processing apparatus and is accessible by an external device. By virtue of this feature, information about the device may be easily obtained, which facilitates identification of functions of the device as well as combinations of functions when a plurality of devices are available. Applicants submit that Silverman et al. also is silent regarding such a feature.

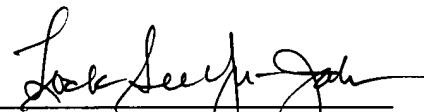
Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 12 is patentable over the cited art, and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Independent Claim 20 is a method claim corresponding to Claim 12, and is believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO SPECIFICATION

The paragraph located on page 46 at lines 9-11 has been amended as follows:

The ink-jet printer of the first embodiment has a configuration ROM like the one shown in Fig. [29] 31. This format complies with the format shown in Fig. 14.

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO CLAIMS

1. (Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:
communication control means for connecting to an external device so as to allow communication; and
memory means for storing information about a device mountable on said information processing apparatus in a memory area [which can be accessed] that is accessible by the external device via said communication control means,

wherein the device mountable on said information processing apparatus includes
an attachable part through which the device is attached to said information processing apparatus,
and a function assist part for assisting a function of said information processing apparatus.

6. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the memory area is specified based upon information held in [a] an Instance Directory of the configuration ROM.

7. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said memory means stores, in the memory area, information indicative of [a] the device mountable on said information processing apparatus and a device [which] that has already been mounted on said information processing apparatus.

8. (Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:

communication control means for connecting to an external device so as to allow communication;

acquisition means for accessing a memory area of the external device via said communication control means and acquiring information about a device [on which] that is mountable on the external device [is mountable]; and

display control means for [performing] controlling a display based upon the information acquired by said acquisition means,

wherein the device that is mountable on the external device includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to the external device, and a function assist part for assisting a function of the external apparatus.

10. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said acquisition means accesses [a] an Instance Directory stored in a configuration ROM defined by the IEEE-1394 standard to acquire information about [a] the device [on which] that is mountable on the external device [is mountable].

11. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said acquisition means acquires information indicative of [a] the device [on which] that is mountable on the external device [is mountable] and indicative of whether [each] a device has already been mounted on the external device, and

said display control means displays [a] the device [on which] that is mountable on

the external device [is mountable] based on [the basis of] the information acquired by said acquisition means, and identifiably displays a device [which] that has already been mounted on the external device.

12. (Amended) An information processing system comprising:

communication control means for connecting to a plurality of information processing apparatuses so as to allow communication;

holding means for holding, in a first information processing apparatus, information about a device mountable on [said] the first information processing apparatus in a memory area [which can be accessed] that is accessible by another information processing apparatus via said communication control means;

acquisition means for allowing a second information processing apparatus to acquire the information held in the memory area via said communication control means; and

display control means for controlling a display based upon the information acquired by said acquisition means in [said] the second information processing apparatus,

wherein the device mountable on the first information processing apparatus includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to the first information processing apparatus, and a function assist part for assisting a function of the first information processing apparatus.

15. (Amended) The system according to claim 14, wherein the memory area is an

area specified based upon information held in [a] an Instance Directory of the configuration ROM.

16. (Amended) The system according to claim 12, wherein said holding means holds, in the memory area, information indicative of a device mountable on [said] the first information processing apparatus and a device [which] that has already been mounted on [said] the first information processing apparatus.

17. (Amended) The system according to claim 16, wherein said acquisition means acquires information indicative of [a] the device [on which said] mountable on the first information processing apparatus [is mountable] and a device [which] that has already been mounted on [said] the first information processing apparatus, and said display control means displays a device [on which] that is mountable on an external device [is mountable] based on [the basis of] the information acquired by said acquisition means, and identifiably displays a device [which] that has already been mounted on the external device.

18. (Amended) A method of controlling an information processing apparatus [having] that includes communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication, and holding means for holding information about a device mountable on the information processing apparatus in a memory area [which can be accessed] that is accessible

by the external device via the communication control means, said method comprising:

[the] a transmission step of transmitting the information about [a] the device mountable on the information processing apparatus, [that is] held in the memory area, via the communication control means in accordance with a request from the external device via the communication control means,

wherein the device mountable on the information processing apparatus includes
an attachable part through which the device is attached to the information processing apparatus,
and a function assist part for assisting a function of the information processing apparatus.

19. (Amended) A method of controlling an information processing apparatus [having] that includes communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication, said method comprising:

[the] an acquisition step of accessing a memory area of the external device via the communication control means and acquiring information about a device [on which] that is mountable on the external device [is mountable]; and

[the] a display control step of [performing] controlling a display based upon the information acquired in [the] said acquisition step,

wherein the device that is mountable on the external device includes an attachable
part through which the device is attached to the external device, and a function assist part for
assisting a function of the external apparatus.

20. (Amended) A method of controlling an information processing system connected to a plurality of information processing apparatuses by communication control means so as to allow communication, said method comprising:

[the] a holding step of holding, in a first information processing apparatus, information about a device mountable on the first information processing apparatus in a memory area [which can be accessed] that is accessible by another information processing apparatus via the communication control means;

[the] an acquisition step of allowing a second information processing apparatus to acquire the information in the memory area via the communication control means; and

[the] a display control step of controlling a display based upon the information acquired in [the] said acquisition step in the second information processing apparatus,

wherein the device mountable on the first information processing apparatus includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to the first information processing apparatus, and a function assist part for assisting a function of the first information processing apparatus.

21. (Amended) A storage medium [which stores] storing a control program for implementing a method of controlling an information processing apparatus [having] that includes communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication, and holding means for holding information about a device mountable on the information processing apparatus in a memory area [which can be accessed] that is accessible by the external

device via the communication control means, the [control program comprising a code of] method comprising:

[the] a transmission step of transmitting the information about [a] the device mountable on the information processing apparatus, [that is] held in the memory area, via the communication control means in accordance with a request from the external device via the communication control means,

wherein the device mountable on the information processing apparatus includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to the information processing apparatus, and a function assist part for assisting a function of the information processing apparatus.

22. (Amended) A storage medium [which stores] storing a control program for implementing a method of controlling an information processing apparatus [having] that includes communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication, the [control program comprising codes of] method comprising:

[the] an acquisition step of accessing a memory area of the external device via the communication control means and acquiring information about a device [on which] that is mountable on the external device [is mountable]; and

[the] a display control step of [performing] controlling a display based upon the information acquired in [the] said acquisition step,

wherein the device that is mountable on the external device includes an attachable part through which the device is attached to the external device, and a function assist part for

assisting a function of the external apparatus.

Claims 23-41 have been canceled.

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